

BENNINGTON COLLEGE
BENNINGTON, VERMONT

*forwarded
4-13-43*

April 13, 1943

Memorandum to the Educational Policies Committee

From Mr. Drucker

Enclosed please find the results of the New York Times test in American history as given to my political economy classes. Because of time limits, the first section of the course (freshmen and sophomores) only answered the first eleven questions; the second section answered all questions with the exception of two or three which I took out as irrelevant.

You will see that the results appear to be appreciably better than the national average. This is far more due to my willingness to accept approximate answers as correct than to any difference in our standards from those of the students tested by the Times (I accepted, for instance, on question 6, both Massachusetts and New Hampshire as the home State of Daniel Webster, etc.).

I am fully conscious of the fact that this is an extremely poor test in which the important is mixed with the irrelevant; and not one question can be said to test understanding or historical feeling. Yet it is such a simple test that wholesale failure must be accepted as an indication of profound ignorance.

It is not this result which induces me to propose to make one section of my political economy course devote itself largely to American history next year. It had been my intention to do so ever since I began to teach here this year; and, of course, I do not propose an American history course proper, but a course which, starting from the existing structure of American economics and society, works its way back to the roots. I would also like to say that in my plans this is but one of two sections with the other one devoted to a different approach. Although the experience with the New York Times test is not in any way responsible for my next year's plans, it certainly supports the argument for them.

	Right Answers	% of total	
	N.Y. Times Nat'l Average	Sec.I,P.E	Sec.II, P.E.
1. Name the thirteen original States.	6	6	5
2. On what principal body of water are the following cities located:			
a. Cleveland	21	54	60
b. St. Louis	29	62	50
c. Cincinnati	22	54	65
d. Portland, Ore.	15	4	25
e. Memphis	16	40	45
f. Milwaukee	19	54	20
3. Name two of the specific powers granted to the Congress by the Constitution of the United States.	44	50	60
4. Name four of the fifteen specific freedoms guaranteed to the individual in the Bill of Rights.	45	36	65
5. Put in their proper sequence:			
a. 1. Election of William Henry Harrison			
2. Jackson's war on the Bank of U.S.			
3. Proclamation of Monroe Doctrine	17	18	10
4. Depression or panic of 1837.			
b. 1. War with Spain			
2. Passage of Homestead Act	10	24	10
3. Inauguration of Theodore Roosevelt			
4. Civil service reform			
c. 1. Dred Scott decision			
2. Mexican War			
3. Compromise of 1850	6	0	5
4. Nullification Act			
d. 1. The Boy Scout movement			
2. First social settlement houses	5	12	10
3. Transcendentalism			
4. The first women's college			

6. Name the home State of the following men during their political prominence:

John C. Calhoun	20	0	20
Andrew Jackson	15	18	30
John Quincy Adams	16	66	90
Daniel Webster	21	60	75
Thomas Hart Benton	1	6	10
James K. Folk	3	0	0
Henry Clay	10	12	10
Mark Hanna	13	30	20
William H. Seward	14	24	20
Grover Cleveland	17	18	35

7. What was the Nullification Act of South Carolina and how was the controversy resulting settled?

6	0	0
---	---	---

8. After each of the following, write what he was principally famous as:

Charles W. Eliot	9	18	20
John D. Rockefeller	71	30	35
Jay Cooke	5	30	35
William James	9	30	75
Francis Parkman	10	12	20
Carl Schurz	4	0	0
James G. Blaine	14	12	10
Walt Whitman	59	90	100
Henry Thoreau	16	54	100
John Burroughs	12	0	10
James J. Hill	10	30	20
Nicholas Biddle	6	24	0
Alexander Hamilton	48	84	40
Roger Taney	8	12	5
De Witt Clinton	17	24	5
Eli Whitney	68	78	95
Jay Gould	17	30	55
Henry Ward Beecher	9	30	40
Alexander H. Stephens	2	0	0
Roger Williams	20	48	85

9. Who was President of the United States during:

1. The War of 1812?	13	6	20
2. Mexican War?	13	42	20
3. Civil War?	75	100	100
4. Spanish-American War?	15	6	10
5. World War I?	70	94	100

- | | | | |
|--|----|----|-----|
| 10. What were the two principal nationalities to migrate from Europe to the United States between 1845 and 1860? | 14 | 24 | 40 |
| 11. Name the Presidents of the United States who were assassinated. | 25 | 12 | 20 |
| 12. Identify: | | | |
| Henry L. Stimson | 64 | | 60 |
| Jesse Jones | 46 | | 0 |
| Sumner Welles | 46 | | 50 |
| Norman Thomas | 40 | | 55 |
| George C. Marshall | 50 | | 25 |
| James F. Byrnes | 30 | | 20 |
| Sam Rayburn | 40 | | 55 |
| Carter Glass | 30 | | 55 |
| 13. What has been the traditional American policy toward China? | 15 | | 80 |
| 14. Name three prominent figures identified with railroad history in the United States. | 7 | | 25 |
| 15. Name any two prominent figures connected with the growths of trusts and monopolies in the United States. | 20 | | 45 |
| 16. With what inventions are the following names connected: | | | |
| Robert Fulton | 60 | | 35 |
| Elias Howe | 49 | | 35 |
| Eli Whitney | 73 | | 90 |
| S.F.B. Morse | 58 | | 50 |
| George Westinghouse | 11 | | 0 |
| Alexander Graham Bell | 60 | | 100 |
| Charles Goodyear | 58 | | 40 |
| 17. Name two areas added to the United States by purchase, and from what nations did we acquire them? | 20 | | 30 |

18. Name the following:

A prominent figure, not now living, connected with the organization of labor
in the United States _____

14

15

One such figure connected with the movement for women's rights _____

13

25

19. Which was the first United States census in which railway mileage could have been
reported? _____

2

15